MISSIONARY PROBLEMS

By

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Thirteen lessons designed to acquaint members of the church with some of the problems of mission work, to create a broader understanding of the needs, and to inspire a greater effort to evangelize the world.

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DEDICATION

To Bro. Wille Cato who has done much to encourage me and other missionaries around the world and who works unceasingly to spread the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

INTRODUCTION

For the last year or so I have been trying to prepare some missionary materials that may be used by congregations throughout the States to further acquaint brethren with the needs, problems, and responsibilities involved in world evangelism. I am convinced that If we are ever going to increase our efforts to reach the masses of the people with the gospel, then we are going to have to begin in the classroom. With proper knowledge and understanding, then progress can be made, and a lot of it.

This particular series of lessons have to do with Missionary Problems. I am not saying that I have included all of the problems and all of the solutions herein, but I have attempted to call attention to some of the more pressing ones and to make suggestions that I believe will be helpful. I have chosen to write on these subjects because I am confident that most Christians are not aware of many of these problems and the far reaching effects they may have on the work that is being done. At the same time, I feel that if more brethren can be acquainted with the ins and outs of mission work in general, they will have a greater sympathy for missionaries and their work and will want to do more to help.

I would like to make it clear that I love all missionaries and I greatly appreciate the work they are doing the world over. What I have said therefore in these materials does not mean that I merely want to be critical or that I am picking on any one. Having been involved in foreign missionary work for the past ten years, however, has taught me many lessons and brought home to me again and again the need for doing a better job. If we can recognize our problems, our mistakes, and our failures then I believe we will want to analyze them and seek a desirable solution to the same. We can do this only by being honest with ourselves and others, and by working together with God to accomplish his purposes in the best way possible.

You will note that much of this material refers to the problems and needs of Asia. This is because I have spent most of my time in this area. However, I have seen the church at work in scores of nations around the world and many of these problems and situations, etc., can be found everywhere. Also, let me remind one and all that I do not wish to leave the impression that I am being dogmatic. I realize that there are always exceptions to every rule, and this is true in dealing with mission work. In other words, what might work in one country, might not work in another, and so on, and this should be kept in mind. I am sincerely interested in world evangelism and if anyone can come up with a solution to any problem that would be better than mine, and in keeping with God's will, then I would be the first one to want to acknowledge it. May God help us all to want to do better and to do more.

In closing, I might point out that I have written this material in the home of Bro. and Sis. Johnnie Hasley in Teheran, Iran. I am very grateful to this fine family for inviting me to come to help with the work and I appreciate not only their kindess to me, but all that they have done to help with the Lord's cause in this great city. I am also thankful for the few other faithful Christians who have stood with them during the past year or so. Although I will not be able to stay long, I have enjoyed the work and feel that the Lord's church has a great future here. There fore, I am trying to encourage some good preacher to come to Teheran on a permanent basis (for the next three or four years) to work with these American brethren and to establish the church among the local people. May God grant that this be done.

J. C. Choate
Teheran, Iran
July 30, 1970

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LESSON ONE

PREPARATION TO GO

For an individual to definitely decide to go into foreign mission work then it means that he has taken a great step forward. I wonder how many members of the church have any idea at all what all is involved in such a decision. It is not easy for the average person to make up his mind to do such. There are many things to think about. It not only involves him, but his wife, his children, family members, the church, his future, and moving into the unknown. Then there are many risks that must be taken into consideration. Will he be able to find a sponsor and the neccessary support ? Will he and his family be able to adjust and do the job that needs to be done ? He also risks being criticized as being unstable, having ulterior motives in going, and so on. But once the decision has been made, this is when he begins the real test inasmuch as he will automatically be faced with a number of immediate problems.

1. Finding a Sponsor.

One of the first problems he is faced with, and perhaps the greatest, is that of finding a congregation that will agree to sponsor him and the work that he wants to do. This can be a very critical time for an individual, for the majority of the congregations over the country are not so anxious to get involved in this kind of thing. They are the ones who do not want to get tied down with all of the work and financial responsibility that goes with such. In every way they are able to do so but offer all kinds of excuses for not following through. I have often said that there would be no difficulty in finding members of the church who would be willing to go provided more congregations would accept the challenge of sponsoring them. But so often, those who would go do not do so, and do not even offer to go, because they are discouraged by the fact that should they volunteer to go then they would have to get out and search out a congregation to send them. Those who do decide to go are usually able to find a sponsor, but not always. Sometimes a preacher is fortunate enough to work with a congregation that wants to send him, or he may happen to run accross a congregation who is looking for some one to send, but in most cases one has to get out on his own and try to convince some congregation that they should send him to the mission field.

How wonderful it would be if hundreds of congregations would come forward to offer to sponsor missionaries around the world. They could if they would. They are financially able. They have the necessary leadership to do it. Even those who think they can't would be surprized with their ability to handle it if they could ever get involved. Their greatest need is to be converted to their responsibility to take the gospel to others.

In spite of the fact that congregations are few and far between that will sponsor a man in a foreign field, more and more are accepting the responsibility, and if an individual really wants to go, and is qualified to go, then if he'll work on it he will be able to find a church to send him.

2. Finding Necessary Support.

Once a sponsor has been found, that is, a congregation that will oversee an individual's work in a foreign country, and will take the responsibility for his financial support, then the next problem is that of finding the necessary funds to go on. In some cases the sponsoring church is in position to take care of the salary, travel fund, and work fund, but usually this does not follow. More than likely the church will provide partial support and then will expect the missionary to seek the remaining funds from sister congregations, with the sponsoring congregation agreeing to receive all such funds.

With this understanding then it is up to the missionary to take from two or three months to several months of traveling over the States, speaking to dozens of congregaations, in an attempt to raise the balance of support needed. This usually turns out to be a difficult task. Some congregations will respond and some will not. Some will be kind and some will be rude. Other congregations will not even allow him to come to tell of the need. He will be told by numerous congregations that their budget is already filled. He will get all kinds of reactions from the local members. Some will love him and appreciate him for his desire to take the gospel to others, but because money is brought into the picture then others may show their displeasure by refusing to give or by making some type of jesture that will show their distaste for this kind of thing. A few will give generously, some will give halfheartedly, but the majority will give little or nothing at all.

All of this can be very tiring and discouraging, and while members of the church may not be happy with the missionary asking for help, they cannot imagine how much happier the missionary himself would be if he did not have to parade over the country asking for help. But inasmuch as he is forced to do so, then congregations and members of the church should not hold it against the missionary, but actually it is the church that is responsible. If the church would do its duty then all of this would be unnecessary.

In spite of all of this, one who is determined can find the necessary support. Sometimes I wonder why brethern give—if it is to get rid of the missionary, to soothe their conscience, or because they really want to have a part in world evangelism. At any rate, they give and that is one more giant problem that is out of the way.

3. Obtaining a Visa.

Another great problem to overcome is that of obtaining a visa. This is something that can be easy or difficult, depending on the country that one wants to go to. Most countries are easy enough to enter for the purpose of preaching the gospel, but some have a closed door policy and it takes a great deal of effort to get in, even if it is possible.

If one is really serious about going to a foreign country to work for the Lord then he needs to look into the visa situation as soon as possible and begin to put forth an effort to obtain one. He should have an alternate country in mind to work in should he not be able to obtain a visa to the country under consideration. However, if one will work hard on this matter, and stay with it, then in all probability he will be able to succeed in getting one.

4. Making the Move.

Most of you know what it means to move at home, but imagine moving from one country to another. That within itself presents many problems. In the first place, everything has to be cleared up at home. Debts should be paid, or arrangements made to take care of them in the months ahead. Then whatever is to be taken has to be gathered up, packed, and shipped. Relatives, loved ones, and friends have to be seen and goodbyes have to be said. Then along with all of the other things, there is the trip itself which is not exactly a holiday.

Only those who have been through all of this can sympathize with those who are going. Most members of the church have no idea whatsoever of all that is involved. They only think of the trip and the nice things that go along with it. It looks so easy and enjoyable and getting to go to a foreign country, and all of that. But they don't think of all the work, problems, and troubles that one must go through just to go and that doesn't include all that will follow. If members of the church in general could be a little more aware of all that is involved in mission work then surely they would appreciate the missionary more and be anxious to do more to help.

None of these things are being said to discourage future missionaries or members of the church who would help, but rather to try to acquaint brethren with some of the things that have to do with mission work with the prayer that there will be a greater understanding and appreciation of that which is being done to take the gospel to others. Not less, but more of this work is needed.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss what it means for one to decide to go into foreign mission work.
2. Who all does it involve ?
3. Mention some of the risks.
4. What is perhaps the greatest problem one faces after deciding to go ?
5. Why do more congregations not offer to sponsor someone in the mission field ?
6. Are all able to find a sponsoring congregation ?
7. Give the reason why so many preachers do not offer to go into foreign mission work.
8. Does the sponsoring congregation always offer to supply all the support ?
9. Where must he go to find the remainder of the support ?
10. Explain the reaction of some of these congregations.
11. Is this an incentive for more to go into mission work ?

12. Who is responsible for all this ?
13. State the importance of a visa.
14. Why have an alternate country in mind ?
15. Make a list of some of the things that the missionary family must do in the process of moving to another country.
16. Is there any work involved in all of this ?

DISCUSSION

1. What do you think of when you hear of a family that is in the process of entering foreign mission work ?
2. Are there any from your area who have gone into mission work ?
3. Does your home congregation sponsor anyone in mission field ? If not, why not ?
4. How do you feel when you are called on to help someone financially to go to another part of the world to preach the gospel ?
5. What is your feeling toward missionaries and the work they are trying to do ?
6. Do you think it would be a lot fun to travel to another country to work for three or four years ?

LESSON TWO

LIVING CONDITIONS

What is it like to arrive in a foreign country? Of course it will depend on whether it is a European type country or an undeveloped nation, but it can be quite an experience. In the first place, most American Christians are somewhat isolated from the rest of the world and therefore have not had contact with foreigners except through television, newspapers, and their own imagination. This often results in building up a barrier that is difficult to overcome. They imagine other countries to be backward, where the people are uneducated, where they don't have many of the necessities of life, and where they are unable to communicate with the local citizens because of different languages. Although many of these things are not true, and most of the countries are quite modern with a great deal of English being spoken, and so on, nevertheless, it is not America and therefore can present problems.

1. **Culture Shock.**

Most Americans arriving in another country experience what is called culture shock. What is this ? It is simply that of waking up to realize that you are in another country where people think, talk, act, and do differently to what you have been accustomed to all of your life. This can be avoided to a great extent before leaving the States if one will make a study of the country that he is going to and then prepare his thinking for the change, telling himself that he can except things to be different and that he should not be surprized regardless of what he sees.

Some are more shocked than others, and while the majority are able to adjust to it, some are unable to and either end up in having to return home as failures or who stick it out but never coming to appreciate the country because of it. But this is not good. If one is to do his best work then he needs not only to learn how to live in his adopted land, but how to even appreciate the people and the way they do things.

The missionary has to realize that there are more cultures in the world than his own. Just because the people that he is working with do not do everything like they do in the States, that does not mean that they are ignorant and backward. If one will take time to consider why things are done the way they are then he will usually discover that there is a good reason for it. Many times it is because of a lack of materials, tools, etc. The more one is around the people, and considering what they have, their opportunities, and so on, then the more he will appreciate them.

In spite of all that is said about culture shock, and in spite of what has been said here, probably it is not experienced to the degree that a lot of people think it is. But regardless, all will admit that there is some adjusting to do just like you have to adjust yourself in moving from one part of the States to another.

2. **The Housing Problem.**

On arriving in a foreign country one of the very first things a person has to do is to locate a place to live. This can be a real problem. Questions come up as to where to live, the kind of house to rent, the amount of rent to be paid, etc.

As much as a house is needed, one should take enough time to make the proper decisions. Perhaps by looking over the city, seeing how it is laid out, considering the types of people in the different areas, and where the schools are, will help one to make a decision as to where to live. It would also be wise not to rent a mansion, and neither a very poor type of house, but something more in between the two. The missionary must consider his family and their future happiness, as well as the work that he is going to be doing. To rent a place that will be advantageous to both will be a great step forward.

3. **The Food Problem.**

Another great problem to solve has to do with food. Since everyone has to eat, with the missionary and his family being no exception, then he has to think about his food, where to get it, what is safe, and so on. In Asian-like countries one will not find too much American food having been shipped in, nor too much local can food. Therefore, it is advised that all of the vegetables be disinfected. But why ? Because there is very little sanitation in these countries, human manure is often used in the fields, there is a lack of cleanliness in general, and the government does not have health standards that they require the local people to comply with. Therefore, there are many germs on the vegetables and foodstuffs and it is easy to get dysentery, hepatitis, etc. Because of this then it is advised that all vegetables and fruits be disinfected. Of course anything that is cooked or boiled is naturally safe to eat. All drinking water should also be boiled for at least thirty minutes. Most of the larger cities supposedly have purified water, but to be on the safe side it is still better to boil it.

Once one becomes familiar with this procedure, and begins to do it on a regular basis, then it becomes a routine thing to do.

Most members of the church are not aware of the many things that a missionary and his family have to go through, not to mention the many things they have to do without and the many sacrifices they have to make, in order to live in a foreign land and to do their work. I am sure if they knew more about it then they would be more appreciative and less critical.

4. The Health Problem.

It would varry from country to country, but many of the poorer type countries do not have the doctors, hospitals, and vacilities that one is familiar with back home. Therefore, this becomes another problem to deal with. With disease being more prevelant, and especially the danger of dysentery and hepatitis ever present, it is most necessary to find a doctor that can be counted on. Some of these countries have Mission Hospitals with American Doctors, but in time one can always locate a good doctor that he can rely on in time of need. As for medicines, they are often times cheaper than they are even in the States.

5. The School Problem.

If the children are old enough for school, then the question arises as to where they can be sent. Most countries have an English School. Some of them even have an American International School with an American type of education including American teachers. This is often expensive but at least it is available.

Parents sometimes resort to correspondence courses if they find themselves in a place where there are no schools to which they would want to send their children. Calvert School in Baltimore, Maryland is excellent for this and several American Universities offer correspondence courses for High School students.

For college, some parents send their children back to the States. Other families simply return since the parents are not desirous of sending their children back alone.

6. The Economy.

For some reason most Americans think that one can live in most any country cheeper than he could live in the

States. But this is not true. It is true that there are numerous countries around the world that are very poor and their economy is very far below that of the United States. Nevertheless, if one lives anywhere close to the way he lives in the States, then he will find that it is quite expensive in spite of the fact that he may not have near as much as he had back home.

Prices for food, especially canned foods, are very high. Many times they run from two to three times higher, or even more. Even local things, like ice cream, milk, butter, eggs, chicken, and so on, are very expensive. Rent is high. Electric and power bills are high. Schooling is very costly. Transportation, like having a car, gas, etc., is also expensive. So when you add all of these things together at the end of each month, then you have spent a good bit of money in spite of all that may have been done to hold the expenses down.

Some would suggest that perhaps the missionary and his family should live more like the local people do. But those who have had much experience in foreign mission work would advise a family to be themselves without extreme. In other words, in Asian-like countries you could live in a mud hut, eat what they do, dress like them, speak their language, etc., but you are still counted as a foreigner. Besides, living like that would probably kill the missionary and his family because they are not physically and mentally able to adjust to that way of living. No, we can't expect such a family to be like the local people any more than we should expect them to be like Americans. Neither do they have to be. They are there to live, to be happy with their new home, and to preach and teach God's word to the local people. They can do this without going to an extreme in either direction, and this is the ideal way of doing it.

These are but a few of the problems that a man and his family have to encounter when they are in a foreign field. If you think for a minute that it is a holiday or a big party then you are kidding yourself. Then why are they there? Because of their love for God, their love for the souls of men, and their desire to take the gospel into all the world. They are certainly not there because of the money inasmuch as they usually receive much less there than those preachers back home, while needing more. Neither could it be travel or adventure because members of the church today find time and opportunity to travel to all parts of the world without having to spend three or four years at it. So it must be that someone is dedicated to the Lord in spite of the criticisms leveled against them, and it is because of such faithful servants of the Lord that the gospel will eventually be taken into all the world. So don't fight them, but pray for them, and support them. If you will then God will bless them and he will bless you too.

QUESTIONS

1. What would it be like to arrive in a foreign country?
2. Why do most American Christians fear the thought of going to another country?
3. Define culture shock.
4. How can it be avoided to a great extent?
5. Can one do his best work if he does not come to appreciate the people and the way they do things?
6. Must everyone do everything like we do it in the states?
7. Why do a lot of people do things like they do?
8. What are some of the things that must be considered in looking for a house in which to live?
9. Describe the kind of house that one should rent.
10. Explain why food becomes a problem for missionary families.
11. Are most members of the church aware of all the many things that the missionary and his family must go through in connection with his work?

12. Discuss the health problem.
13. List some of the solutions in educating the children.
14. How would the local economy effect the missionary family and their work ?
15. Is it normally less expensive to live outside the United States ? Why ?
16. Would it be advisable for the missionary family to live like the local people ?
17. Could it be said that the missionary family are on an extended vacation ?
18. Why would a man and his family want to go to a foreign land to preach the gospel ?

DISCUSSION

1. How would you explain culture shock ?
2. What would be some of the problems as a result of the missionary going to the extreme in one direction or the other in choosing a place to live ?
3. How would you like to disenfect all of your vegetables and fruits and boil all of your water day after day for years to remain in a place to carry on the Lord's work ?
4. How would the problems of living in a mission field compare with those one must face at home ?
5. What do you feel are the motives behind those going to work in a foreign field ? What of the motives of those who remain at home ?

LESSON THREE

BEGINNING THE WORK

To many, it is a frightening thought to think about going into a foreign city to try to begin the Lord's church from scratch. It does present problems but these can be overcome in time. Let's consider some of them.

1. A Meeting Place.

Going to work for the Lord, then naturally one of the first things to be considered is a place to conduct worship services. Matters are not helped much when the missionary has just arrived, does not know the city well, and cannot tell just what the needs may be.

One solution may be, at least for the present, for the missionary to decide to couduct the meetings in his home. By so doing then he has time to choose a place that will better suit the local situation, needs, and so on.

Regardless of when such a place is chosen then the location, rent, and other things, must be taken into consideration. He must also be careful so as not to sign a lease that will hold him to such a place for too long, unless he is really convinced that this is what the church will need for a long time to come. The meeting place then becomes an all important matter when it is realized that the kind of house or rented hall can have a great deal to do with the future growth of the church.

2. Language.

Some are fortunate enough to go to a country where

English is spoken, but the majority will end up in a part of the world where there will be one or more languages to contend with. While English may be spoken to a point, one will find that in order to do the job that really needs to be done then something will have to be done to reach those who do not know English.

There are several possibilities. To begin with, some brethern start off by studying the language even before leaving the States. However, this is not always possible. The next best thing to do then is for one to attend a language school in the country that he is going to be working in. This may take a year or more, but if one is going to learn the language then it is better to go ahead with it. Furthermore, he should do this before getting involved in the local work because it is almost impossible to do both at the same time. Some choose to have a private language instructor to come to their home daily, but this usually fails in producing the desired results.

If one is not going to learn the local language then in all probability he will have to rely on a translator. But where is he going to get a translator? There are often young men in most every city who not only know their own language well, but also English. One of these may be hired to help translate sermons and materials into the local language. Or it may be that one can make out in English long enough until he can convert some of the local people and then one of the members can be used as a translator. But whether a member of the church or not, he'll have to keep a close check on the translation work being done whether oral or printed. Usually there are various ways to do this. In the first place, some of the other people will call the mistakes to the missionary's attention. Then with the passing of time he will learn enough of the language to keep a pretty good check on his translator. In the next place if he has a man that has truly been converted to the truth, and is sincere in his work, then he'll do a good job. But in spite of everything that might be said, translation cannot come close to being as effective as knowing the language, and therefore speaking to the local people in their own tongue. The people appreciate it when the missionary puts forth an effort to learn their language. Then of course there is nothing that can take the place of speaking directly to someone instead of having to go through a translator. You lose a lot, at best, in trying to speak through another person.

I would encourage all future missionaries to learn the language of the country in which they are going to be working. They will find the time, money, and the effort invested, will be more than worth it. Furthermore, they will find a great deal of satisfaction of being able to communicate with the people in their own language.

3. The People Attracted.

The beginning of the Lord's church in most any part of the world usually follows a similar pattern. It all begins with the wrong kind of people being attracted. These are the ones who have nothing to lose and who are curious to see what this new organization may have to offer them. Many of these are well known to the different religious groups in the city since they have made the round. But with a new missionary in town, and not knowing the kind of people they are, then he may be taken in by them. They approach the missionary as though they are very interested in the church of Christ, that they want to obey the Lord, etc. And since the missionary is anxious to teach and to convert someone then he spends a lot of time with them and encourages them to become members of the church. The sad part is that once they do they immediately approach the missionary for help in one way or the other, and if it is not forthcoming then they soon fall by the way side.

While the gospel is for everyone, the missionary has to be careful and not be taken in by religious beggars and racketeers. The best way to handle it is to let it be under-stood from the beginning that the church has no intention in getting involved in a lot of local projects that would tend to emphasize only the physical and material needs of the people. He should not allow himself to be used of others to accomplish their selfish goals. If this is handled wisely then in time the drifters, beggar types, and so on, will go on their separate ways and then gradually a better class of people will begin to express an interest and to obey the Lord.

4. The Local People are Watching.

Those who are involved in other religions, or who are members of different denominational groups, even though they have had the opportunity to hear the truth, they are not anxious to act too quickly on that which they have heard. Rather, they are cautious and for the time being are content to wait and to watch. They wonder if this might not be a fly-by-night operation. They are concerned about where the church came from, what it teaches, how long it will be there, and so on. They want to be sure that they are doing the right thing before they make a move because while they are members of an organization that is well established, has its own preachers, meeting houses, and where all of their friends are, the church of Christ is new, with no standing in the community,, without its own meeting house, etc. So the local people take their time about making a move.

With the passing of time, if the missionary stays busy preaching and teaching God's word, then the more stable people of the community will one by one be converted to the truth. With every conversion it will make it possible for others to be reached. But it should be remembered that it takes time to build a good strong work. A lot of people may be baptized almost from the beginning, but these are the kind who usually drift away in a short period of time. The more stable people tend to act more slowly and surely but they are the kind on which the work will rest in the future.

5. Limitations.

At best, the work will be limited in comparison to a work in the States. Everything has to be done from scratch. This takes time. The church will have to meet in rented quarters instead of its own spacious, luxurious building. In all probability there will be no radio and television stations available on which to preach God's word. Because of a scaracity of workers, money, and supplies, then the work is limited even more. But by using what is available, and taking advantage of the opportunities that are prevelant, then the church is established and it grows.

If one is going to a foreign mission field then he should make up his mind that he will be faced with such limitations and therefore will have to carry on the work accordingly. To go with this understanding, will help one to better adjust and to use more effectively what he does have to work with.

6. Americanizing.

One of the great dangers of Americans going to the mission field is the temptation to Americanize. In other words, you can usually tell where Americans are, and this includes most of the mission work, since they have Mid-Week Bible Study, services at the usual hour on Sunday morning and evening, the invitation after each sermon, and an American type church building, if they have been responsible in building one, etc. Now this is not to say that our way of doing things in the States is not good, or that it is even wrong in a foreign land, but situations and needs change from country to country. For example, while we have an invitation after each sermon, most foreigners find this to be meaningless. Therefore it might be better just to leave off the formal invitation song and encourage those who want to obey the Lord to let it be known after the meeting. Then in many parts of the world, especially in those areas where the people are so poor, then a Mid-Week service might not be possible. In other words, under the circumstances the people may be doing good to get to the meeting place even once each Lord's Day. Naturally in the States where we are better off financially, all of us own cars, and transportation is no problem, then it is not difficult for us to meet two or three times a week. But just because we can do it then that does not mean that others can and therefore we should consider their situations and their needs and act accordingly.

The missionary is to take the gospel to other peoples, but this does not include preaching Americanism, making Americans out of them, or doing anything that is done just exactly like it is done in America. That does not mean that one should turn anti-American, speak out against his country, and so on, but it does mean that he should be Christian and preach and teach Christianity.

As mentioned to begin with, there are problems in beginning a new work from scratch, but they can be solved, and there is nothing quite like planting the cause of Christ in a place for the first time. One doesn't have to deal with a dead congregation, and a lot of other things, but he can begin from the ground up and try to build a work that will live on and on.

QUESTIONS

1. What is one of the things that the missionary must think about when he and his family arrive in a foreign land ?
2. Mention two possibilities for a meeting place for the church.
3. Discuss some of the things that must be considered when renting a place for the church to meet.
4. To what extent is English spoken around the world ?

5. Should one plan to learn the language of the country to which he is going ?
6. When should the language study be done ?
7. Why learn the local language ?
8. Who are the ones that are usually the first to be attracted to the church ?
9. What are they after in most cases ?
10. How should this be handled ?
11. Discuss why the more stable people take so long to act.
12. In what ways will the work be limited ?
13. Explain what it means to Americanize.
14. Would it be wise to express an anti-American feeling ?
15. What should be one's goal in beginning a new work ?

DISCUSSION

1. Why would a meeting place be so important ?
2. How would you react to the preacher of the local church if he couldn't speak English ?
3. What are religious beggars after here in the States ? In a poor country, you can imagine how the missionary would be over-burdened with these kind of people. How would you deal with them ?
4. Explain how you as an American would approach other people with the gospel.

LESSON FOUR

THE LOCAL CHURCH

As you look over the world you will discover the church in many places, but even though mission work has been going on for numerous years, you will discover that practically all of the congregations are dependent on American missionaries, support, and different types of help to keep going. But why ? This is a good question and worth further study.

1. Outside Support.

When we go into a place to work we supply a missionary and support for the establishment of the church. If a building is erected, then we erect it. If local help is needed then we hire some of the members. We print all of the tracts, magazines, and books. We provide the leadership. When it comes time for the missionary to leave then we send one to replace him, and on and on it goes. Is it any wonder then that we are not producing self-supporting works ?

Why can't we approach mission work on a different basis ? Instead of going in to set up a work that we will forever be burdened with, why not go in with the thought in mind of putting as much responsibility as possible on the local people from the beginning? Why not begin immediately to train the members to take over ? What about meeting in the place of their choosing ? Teach them to give and gradually turn the responsibility over to them, including that of one of the members of the congregation serving as treasurer ? What about letting them take more of the lead in preaching and teaching ? If they want a building, then why not give them the opportunity to build according to their needs ? They can and will take the responsibility if we'll give them them the opportunity. If after years and years of help, they are still not able to do this then there is something wrong somewhere and we need to be finding out where the wrong is.

2. Local Giving.

I havs personally found that most of the local members want to give but it is almost nothing in comparison to what it should be. But as already discussed, perhaps they are not convinced of the need for giving since we have provided all of the financial aid for the many different needs. Perhaps if we would do more teaching on giving, show them the need for it, and then give them the opportunity to use their funds for the furtherance of the work, then that might make all the difference in the world to them.

At least in Asia the idea is prevalent among the local people that the missionary has come to help the poor people and therefore they should be given the opportunity to help. While the missionary should help, it should be restricted more to that of preaching and teaching God's word and doing those things for the cause of Christ that the local people cannot do. Even the program should be worked out so that as soon as possible the local people could even begin to help with these areas of the work. If it is handled right then surely the people will begin to give more. They must, or else the work will never reach the point of being self-supporting. In other words, they must be convinced that they must help themselves. With proper motives, and with pride in their own progress, they will respond.

3. Preacher Jealousy.

One of the great problems within the local congregation, especially where there are hired preachers, is that of preacher jealousy. Each one is afraid that the other is going to get a little more attention than he is. They often end up in finding fault with each other, criticizing one another's ability, and trying to turn the missionary against the other fellow. Of course the idea is that if one of these preachers can lower the other then that will elevate him. It gets very ugly some time.

What is the solution? As far as hired preachers are concerned, they should be dismissed and that will help to solve a lot of the trouble right there. I have never seen many foreigners that were worth much to the cause of Christ once money became involved. Then when taken off the payroll most of them usually quit the church since they lose face or because they were hirelings to begin with.

If jealousy exists among preachers, and various members of the church, then they are just going to have to be taught what Christianity is all about, that it means that Christians are to love one another and be able to work together.

4. Preacher Shortage.

Where there are no hired preachers (and where there are hirelings, everyone wants to preach) then one of the problems is that of having enough of the young men to become involved in preaching. Perhaps a better way of putting it would be to say that it is difficult to find qualified young men to preach. Most of the ones who want to preach are uneducated, ignorant of God's word, lazy when it comes to study and preparation, without sufficient zeal and initative to be worth much to the cause of Christ. That is, it would appear that they are the ones who would choose preaching only to escape other types of work and to make a living off the church.

I believe there will be more preachers to come forward in the future if we'll begin to put the emphasis in the right place. In other words, we should show the young men of the congregation what it means to preach, what it involves, how to preach, and so on. What we need more than anything else are men who love the Lord so much that they are going to preach and teach his word as they have opportunity in spite of the fact that they may have to continue with a secular job to make their living. With these kind of preachers then the local people will respect them, listen to them, and respond to their teaching. Then others will want to follow in their steps, and thus we are headed in the right direction. Thousands of the other kind, hirelings for the main part, will do more damage than good in the long run.

5. Materialism.

One of the great hindrances in the church in foreign fields is that of materialism. While the majority of the people may be poor, so often it seems that their only thought is that of getting some kind of help, a job, and so on. A great deal of teaching then has to be done on the work of the church, the importance of the soul, and the importance of spiritual things.

6. Marriage.

In Asia, and perhaps other parts of the world, the local people are concerned about whether there will be someone to marry their children if they become members of the church. They are aware of the fact that the church is young, and may not as of yet have anyone appointed by the government to perform marriage ceremonies, and hence the problem. Since marriage is one of the highlights of their lives, then we have to try to convince them that they should go ahead and obey the Lord and as members of the Lord's church then we will try to work out some arrangement on the marriage problem.

In some places in Africa especially one of the problems that the missionary has to deal with is polygmy. Some have reasoned that inasmuch as this has been practiced for years, and since it would be difficult to change the older people, then they should be allowed to become members of the church, while keeping their wives, and that the future generations can be taught differently. I would have to reject this type of reasoning. In the first place, I do not believe that such people who are living in such a condition, having not repented by quitting their polygmy, could ever become members of the church. Neither can I conceive of Jesus winking at sin in order to gain their allegiance. Read Matthew 5-8 ; Matthew 19 ; Luke 13 : 3; and Acts 17:30.

7. A Burial Place.

Another Asian problem in particular is a burial place. Land is at a premium and the denominational groups have their own cemeteries. However, to be buried in one of them one has to belong to the denomination that owns the burial ground. But suppose he leaves that denominational body to become a member of the Lord's church. Then he wants to know where he will be buried, should he die. Well, this is a new problem for most Americans. But the church will either have to make arrangements for some burial ground or arrange to pay a fee to use a local cemetery, and therefore assure these people that they will be properly buried should they die or should any of their children die. It sounds a little ridiculous to us, and perhaps should be handled personally, but it is a very real problem to them and one that has to be dealt with.

8. Masses of People.

There are so many people in Asia, and elsewhere as far as that is concerned, that have never heard the gospel of Christ. The question is : How are we ever going to reach them ? Millions of them are dying year after year without God and hope. To most Americans this may not mean much because they have not seen them and most of our people have heard the gospel not once but many many times. But to the missionary, and all people who are concerned about the lost of the world, then this becomes a life and death proposition. Here is the missionary constantly aware of all of these people and there needs and he sees how little that can be done with the workers available, and the tools to work with, and so he begins to cry out for help. You no doubt have heard many of these pleas for help but how many of you have responded ? Probably you have paid little attention to it and thought that here was another missionary nagging you for help. But it is frustrating indeed to be in the missionary's shoes and to catch it from both sides. Consequently he works day and night, far beyond the call of duty, or even for his own good, to try to do what he can to save the lost that are all around him.

What is the solution ? The only possible solution is for more Christians to go and for more Christians to send and for us to work together to take the gospel to these people and in turn to convert and train them to evangelize their own.

9. A Lack of Literature.

Since radio and television are not available in most of these places, our only other means for mass evangelism is through the use of literature. Our problem however is not that the people will not read it, or that the government will not allow it, but that we do not have enough of it. We are putting out nothing practically in comparison to what we need to be distributing. And we can put it out in the local language of the area too. Here is a tremendous opportunity. How we need to take advantage of it. Now.

These are but a few of the problems to be found within the local church and problems that the church has to face day after day. These problems are real and they must be dealt with. It is not always easy to deal with them, but we must. Pray for the work in foreign lands and those who are faced with these problems.

QUESTIONS

1. What are most congregations around the world dependent on?
2. Explain what happens when we go into a new place to begin the work.
3. Will this produce self-supporting congregations ?
4. Discuss the possibility of using a different approach.
5. Give some positive suggestions on how to cope with this problem.
6. How do the local members respond when it comes to giving ?
7. What steps might be taken to encourage more giving ?
8. State the prevalent attitude of the local people concerning the coming of the missionary and the solution to the problem.
9. Why do the local preachers become jealous of each other ?
10. Give the solution to this problem.
11. Who are the ones who usually want to preach ?
12. How can we encourage more young men to sincerely preach the gospel ?
13. Is it possible for poor people to be materialistic ? How ?
14. State the marriage problem in Asia.
15. Should Christians ever condone polygmy?
16. Discuss the Asian problem of finding a burial place.
17. Explain some of the problems the missionary faces as a result of the masses of people that he is constantly confronted with.
18. What is our sole means for mass evangelism in much of the world ?

DISCUSSION

1. Make some suggestions on the course that should be taken to assure the establisment of more self-supporting congregations.
2. Do you feel that we are using our money in the mission field as wisely as we should ?
3. How can we encourage brethren at home and abroad to give more ? Are the problems the same or are they different ? If so, then in what ways ?
4. Should the missionary be sympathetic with those with whom he is working when it comes to their own local peculiar problems ?
5. Discuss the various means of mass commnnication that are available and to the extent that they should be used in world evangelism.

LESSON FIVE

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Some brethern have the idea that should they move to a foreign country they would be able to escape all of the religious confusion and division that is prevalent in the States, but this is not true. If anything, one would experience more of it and would be dealing with a more evangelistic type of denominationalism. In addition to this, there would probably be other religions to contend with such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and so on.

1. **Denominationalism.**

While in many countries of today the churches of Christ are to be found, this is rather a late effort on the part of the Lord's people to take the gospel into all the world. In the mean time some of the denominations have had workers there for more than a hundred years. Other religious groups have had established works there for many many years before we ever arrived on the scene. That means that they are well entrenched and cannot be easily removed.

I have personally observed that most foreign people have been so exposed to the religious groups of the day that all of their thinking seems to be in terms of denominationalism. Therefore, it is difficult to straighten their thinking out so as to really convert them to the idea of pure New Testament Christianity.

One thing that perhaps may be in our favor is the ecumenical movement that has been going on during the past few years. With the denominations being aware of the need for unity, then this may be an opportunity to sell them on the idea of the unity that is set forth in God's word.

2. Catholicism.

Many of the countries in Europe and South America are dominated by Catholicism. That means that if one is going to work in one of those countries then he needs to be well acquainted with the teachings of the Catholic Church and how to deal with them.

There will be many problems to face in working among these people. They are often ignorant of the Bible, controlled by the local priest, and are warned to stay away from other religious groups. But there are always some who are looking and searching for the truth. Others can be reached through kindness, good works, literature, radio preaching, and so on. It will take patience and time but it can be done.

3. Other Religions.

In Asian countries in particular the missionary is faced not only with denominationalism but with several other religions. For instance, there is Islam. While it teaches that there is one true and living God, it denounces Christ as the Son of God and puts forth Mohammed as God's prophet. It also rejects the New Testament in particular but offers the Quran as the inspired word of God. Then there is Hinduism with all of its idolatry. Within this general system one may also find Sikhism and Jainism with their own peculiar teachings and practices. Buddhism is more of a philosophy but is kin to Hinduism. Zoroastrianism has its own unusual practices which includes fire worship.

To go into the countries of these religions then one needs to have a good knowledge of them and how to answer their teachings. One should be well versed in

Christian evidences because he'll need them every step of the way.

4. Persecution.

All of these religious groups are of men. Their weapons of survival are not truth and hope, but ignorance, fear, domination, and persecution. They make it extremely difficult for one to leave to accept another teaching. I have known cases where the individual who became a Christian was completely cut off from his family, left without any support, not allowed to work, and with no one to turn to for help except the church. Sometimes an individual is strong enough to survive all of this but often times they fall away.

There are times that the persecution is directed toward the missionary and the church in different forms but it usually involves those who turn their back upon a certain religion to become a Christian. The great problem for the missionary then is how to combat this persecution and to help those who are so treated. For sure, it is not easily dealt with, but it is possible to get around it.

Sometime the country refuses to grant a visa to the missionary or on his arrival they may restrict or limit his activity. Tract distribution may be forbidden. Conversion of the local religious people may be denied. And on and on the problems may go.

5. Don't be afraid.

Regardless of all of these religious teachings and practices, do not allow them to scare you off. Some have, and evidently this is one reason why we are finding it so difficult in getting brethren to go into the Islamic countries to work for the Lord, but this is a tremendous mistake.

I know of no country in the world where I would not go to work for the Lord if I had the opportunity to do so.

I know of no religion or system in the world that I would be afraid to meet. Some people are a little more difficult to reach than others, but all are lost and need the gospel and therefore we should be ready to take the truth to them. Regardless of religion or background, there are worlds of opportunities to preach and teach God's word among all people. Try it and see for yourself.

My brethren, what the world needs more than anything else is the gospel of Jesus Christ. People are ready for a change. Many are searching, questioning, seeking information about Christianity. I know they are because I have experienced it in many different lands. What shall we do about it then ? Pass them by, to allow them to turn to something else, or shall we respond to their need, teach them, and convert them to Christ ? How we need to act and to act now.

6. A Religious Crisis.

Millions and millions of people now are Communists. They do not believe in God and they are working day and night to turn others away from God. Right now when people are questioning religion millions more are at a point where they can easily go in either direction. They can be taught the truth and led closer to God or they can be ignored and therefore be led into unbelief and away from religion altogether. The direction they go in may well depend on what we do about these matters.

The religious world is so divided, confused, and mixed up that it might cause some to think that it is too far gone to save. Indeed, this kind of thing has already resulted in many turning against God and religion all together. But we cannot give up and neither can we fail the world today by denying mankind that which can save it, purify it, and give it hope.

QUESTIONS

1. Can one escape denominationalism by moving to a foreign country ?
2. How long have some of the denominations had workers in some of the foreign countries ?
3. In what way has the ecumenical movement changed the religious climate around the world ?
4. What are some of the problems that one will have to face in dealing with the Catholic Church ?
5. Name some of the religions that one will have to contend with in Asia.
6. Make some suggestions on how one should go about preparing to meet these different religions.
7. List some of the weapons that these religious groups use to maintain their positions.
8. Who are the ones that are usually persecuted ?
9. Mention some ways that the missionary might be persecuted.
10. Should Christians allow persecution to scare them off ?
11. Are there many opportunities today to preach the gospel ?
12. What does the world need today more than anything else ?
13. Do people want Christianity ?
14. What religious crisis exist in the world today ? Why ?
15. How should we react to this crisis ?

DISCUSSION

1. Why have the denominations preceded the church in so many parts of the world ?

2. How do you feel that the church can best combat religious error in foreign lands ?
3. What would be your advice to a man that is going to another country to preach the gospel in light of the other religions that he will have to contend with ?
4. Does the Christian religion have anything to fear from other religions, communism, etc ?
5. What can we do as the Lord's people to have a greater influence on the world for good ?

LESSON SIX

AMERICAN MEMBERS

Should you travel over the world you would find Americans everywhere. Many of them would be tourists, but others would be service men, construction workers, business people, and so on, who are settled down for a year or two or more at a time. Some of these would be members of the church.

1. Opportunities for Foreign Work.

Today there are many opportunities for members of the church to go into all parts of the world to work. For example, there are numerours American Schools in different countries that are in constant need of faculty members. There are government positions, construction jobs, business openings, and worlds of other opportunities for those who might be interested in working overseas.

For those who are willing to go, there are encouraging features. Besides a top salary, the air-fare to and from the country is given, allowances are included, and it is all tax free. In spite of the high prices one will find in another land, still it is possible for one to save some money. But for dedicated members of the church, it also presents a wonderful opportunity to help establish the Lord's cause in a new land or to help those who may already be there for that purpose.

2. Unwilling to Go.

The sad part about all of this is that the great majority of members of the church are either not aware of these many opportunities to do foreign work or else they are not interested in it. For sure, very few end up in going to some other part of the world to work. This is such a shame because the need is great for a number of reasons. First, if we could encourage more to go then it means that naturally more could be done for the Lord. Second, it wouldn't cost the church anything since they would be going at the expense of there company or who ever they may be working for. And third, it would prepare them to be worth more to the Lord and world evangelism on their return to the States.

3. Americans have Helped.

Of the members of the church who have gone into other lands, a good percentage of them have been a great help to the cause of Christ. We will consider some of them :

a. The church has been established in a number of foreign countries through the efforts of Americans who have been stationed there in the military or who have gone there to do secular work. In some cases. this has amounted to no more than for the Americans Christians to begin conducting worship services on a regular basis. In other cases, the church has been established among the local people.

b. Members of the church have gone into parts of the world to work where some missionary was struggling to preach the gospel and to plant the cause of Christ. Besides all of the fellowship and encouragement that they were able to give, they also were able to help with the work in various ways. This included teaching classes, helping with Bible correspondence work, visitation, etc.

c. Some of these members of the church have become so involved in the work that they asked for an extension of their time or on returning to the States made arrangements to return later to help with the work.

d. Some areas have been opened up by members of the church who went in to do secular work when the country would not allow missionaries to come. An example of this is the church being established in Bombay, India by American Christians when at the same time the Indian Government refused to allow my family and I to come there as missionaries.

e. Other areas have been opened up by members of the church who went to do secular work when missionaries of the church would not go. This has happened in Teheran, Iran. Although pleas went forth again and again for more than three years for some preacher and his family to go to Teheran to preach the gospel, no one answered the call. In the mean time, service families, and families working for oil companies, got together and began conducting worship services in the Community Church building. Later, because of restrictions placed on them, they began to meet in the home of one of the members, and then later in a rented building. Some difficulties arose concerning their right to be able to meet, so they shifted back to the home that they had formerly met in. After making application to the local police, recognition was given to the church. Now it is possible for the church to carry on its work undisturbed. Pleas are still being sent forth for some good preacher and his family to go to Teheran to work with this group of American Christians and to begin the church among the local people. During this time I tried to help them.

As a result of American Christians becoming involved in the Lord's work in these ways, then they have found a real purpose in being there and have been tremendously blessed. Instead of killing time, hating the place, wanting to return home, they have something to do, enjoy the fellowship of each other, take pleasure in preaching and teaching God's word locally, and therefore the time just flies by. Consequently, the whole thing becomes a great blessing to them and to others.

4. Some Americans have Hindered.

Other American Christians have gone into different countries around the world to do secular work, or as members of the Armed Services, and they have done more to harm the Lord's cause than anything else. We'll mention some of them :

a. Some of these never bother to let anyone know that they are members of the church. In other words, being away from home, and not being too interested in spiritual matters anyway, then this is a perfect set up for them to remain anonymous.

b. So many of those who are not too interested do not bother to attened. They do not follow the usual pattern of the unfaithful at home by attending off and on.

c. The American members, coming from different parts of the States, then you may find in one congregation where there are several American families represented a real cross-cut of ideas and beliefs. Some are quite worldly, while others are very godly. There may be some liberals and some who are strictly conservative. Some of these may hurt the local work considerably.

d. The weaker members often are not willing to stand their ground should some problem come up. They would never think of putting God before the wishes of the local government. This hurts.

e. Some time American members are not very considerate of the local needs. They are quite selfish and want a lot of attention. They would prefer that the preaching be directed to them rather than to the local people, if it is a mixed congregation. Members often quit because of these differences.

With people like these, then they do more damage than good. The local people look at them, and especially those who are wordly, and are puzzled to think that these people claim to represent Christianity. The Americans themselves find their stay a miserable experience, and can hardly wait until they are able to return to the States.

Because of these kind of people some of the missionaries reach the point where they had much rather work in a city where there are no American Christians there. However, faithful ones more than make up for the bad ones and they are most welcome.

5. Some Suggestions.

As stressed, we need more and more American Christians taking advantage of the opportunities of going into different parts of the world to do secular work. While there then they can be worth a great deal to the Lord's cause. In those areas where there are so many American members, then it would appear that they need their own congregation, with their own preacher, and then maybe such a congregation can be responsible in providing funds, etc., for another missionary family to come to work with the local people. Naturally where there are only a few families or so then they can fit in with the work among the local people.

Because more and more American Christians are moving about, then congregations all over the States needs to be doing more to prepare its members for the day that they will move to some other place in America or to a foreign country. A lot of the present day members do not compliment the congregation that they are from by telling where they come from. On the other hand, if the members of the church could be grounded, trained and prepared to go elsewhere and be able to carry on for the Lord and do a good job then it would boost the cause of Christ the world over.

As a missionary, in spite of the few who hurt the church wherever they go, I would like to commend all of those Americans who have had a part in helping the cause of Christ around the world, and I would !ike to appeal again for more help along this line. Please brethren, help us to evangelize the world. Either go yourself, preacher or not, with a salary from the church or from your secular job, or get busy and help support those of us who are willing to go and who are going. Together, we will evangelize the world in spite of all of the troubles, problems, and hindrances.

QUESTIONS

1. Give some of the reasons why Americans may be found in all parts of the world.
2. Are there any opportunities today for members of the church to find work outside of America ?
3. What are some jobs that are available ?
4. List some of the encouraging features to such jobs.
5. Why are not more members of thc church interested in going ?
6. List three reasons why more Americans should go.
7. How have American Christians helped with the Lord's work in foreign countries ?

8. Discuss some ways that some American Christians have hindered the work in foreign lands.
9. Are most American Christians faithful when they go to another part of the world ?
10. Why are not more of them faithful ?
11. Are American Christians always considerate of the local needs ?
12. Why do so many Americans find their overseas stay so miserable ?
13. How can the church prepare its members to be ready to move to another part of the world so that they will be worth something to the Lord ?
14. How can the average Christian help evangelize the world ?

DISCUSSION

1. Why do most Americans consider foreign secular work ?
2. Do you think it would be wise to encourage more American Christians to go to other parts of the world on secular jobs ?
3. Do you know of any who have gone ? Have they been helpful to the Lord's cause or otherwise ?
4. Would you be willing to go if you had the opportunity ?
5. Do you feel that enough is being done at home to prepare members of the church to be able to survive should they go elsewhere ? Explain.

LESSON SEVEN

VILLAGE WORK

In Asia, and other parts of the world, there are untold millions of village people. For the most part they are illiterate, superstitious, and poor. In spite of this, in some areas in particular they are very easily "converted". Some of our missionaries feel that these are the kind of people that we should work with. On the other hand, there are many problems involved and in this lesson we are going to consider some of them.

1. Proper Teaching.

Those who spend a lot of time working among rural people often go from one village to another preaching the gospel of Christ. Not much time is spent at any one place and many of the people may belong to another religion. Although this is all new to them, a large number may request baptism. Then they are left on their own, and off the missionary goes to another village.

The gospel is for everyone, but the question arises as to whether these people have been taught sufficiently to understand what they are doing. How can uneducated, idolatrous, deceived people hear one sermon or so and understand their duty well enough to obey the Lord and to be faithful Christians ? Most all of the people that I have ever had anything to do with, regardless of who they were, it took time and a lot of teaching to convert them. Then most of time had to have a great deal more teaching, and even then it was difficult to wean them away from all of their false ideas and the denominationalism that was in them. I therefore cannot conceive of whole villages obeying the Lord without any former work being done among the people there.

2. Communalism.

In Asia especially so many of the people are tribal or communal. They are the kind of people who act as a unit. This may explain why whole villages can be "converted" at one time. Those who are preaching to them may not know this and conclude that they are sincerely obeying the Lord when most of them may be just going with the others. Such people are easily influenced, especially if there is a leader among them or someone in the area who knows how to handle them, and wants them to do something. I have been told this more than once even by the people of these countries.

3. The White Man.

The foreigner is commonly seen in the larger cities but way back in the villages the people hardly ever have the opportunity to see a white man. For a foreigner to go into such a place for the purpose of preaching then he can automatically get an audience any time of the day or night. The people don't necessarily gather to hear the gospel, since they don't know anything about it in most cases, but they gather to see the white man. Being uneducated, and very poor, and feeling very inferior to this foreigner, then they can be easily led in most any direction, even though they may not know what they are doing.

4. Motives.

Another thing that must be taken into consideration in dealing with village people, is that of motives. What are their motives for responding to be baptized ? Are they really obeying the Lord or are they hoping that with their response will come some type of material help ? In many cases I would suspect the latter.

You can't imagine how poor these people are. They are not much better off than the animals of the land. They have little to eat, only a mud hut or grass shack to live in, and have to work hard to even survive. Life is one great struggle—for them, for their families, and for the villages. If through this foreigner, and his religion, they can be helped some materially and physically then why not go along with it?

5. Leadership.

Another great problem in dealing with village people is that of the lack of leadership. The people as a whole are followers, not leaders. Then it is difficult to find a man among them who has enough ability to take over the leadership of the group, and even if there is such a person, then it is difficult to get the group to respect him enough to accept him as their leader.

In the end you have a group of people on your hands that are looking to you for guidance. But if you are going from one village to another, then how can you take care of all of them ? The only thing that can be done is either to leave them on their own and hope for the best or to send someone in to the area to guide them in the work. Regardless of the course taken, in all probability, in a matter of time the thing will end in failure. I'll tell you why as we go along.

6. Hiring Preachers.

All of this village work leads to that of hiring preachers along the way to help take care of all these people. This within itself draws the wrong kind of people and the missionary ends up with a group of hireings that he can never really trust. So he puts one in one area to take care of one or more village congregations, and then another in still another area to take care of the congregations there, and so on. Then those preachers, not having the proper teaching and training themselves, and being there in the interest of a salary only in most cases, find it difficult to gain the confidence of the people. Although the missionary may not be able to see what is happening, the local people know exactly the kind of preachers that are supposedly working with them. So being out there all alone, the preacher may go to his appointments or he may not. If he chooses to go then he has to go around and notify all of the members that the meeting is to begin at a certain time and at a certain place. They may come or they may not. Of course, regardless, the preacher sends back glowing reports to the missionary, and even manages to gather up a group of people in the area for the missionary to come to baptize at the first opportunity. And on and on it goes. Then the missionary sends back the wonderful report that so many more hundred have been baptized and that there are so many congregations in the area. And brethren at home drink this up and automatically count every person baptized as being bound for heaven itself. How sad.

7. Solution.

It is easy to question what is being done, but it is another matter to come up with a workable solution. And yet, the question is there whether it is ever brought up or not. Even then, it is not intended to simply find fault with the missionary because he is faced with the problem of having so many opportunities to preach, so many people to deal with, and how to handle it. I know because I have been faced many times myself with the question as to what to do with village people, and I have preached to them many times. But invariably I have always been left with a hopeless feeling and that I was wasting my time. It was as though I was dealing with helpless children. There was no problem in having opportunities to preach to them, or to even baptize them. But then what ? Unless I was willing to go out to sit down with them, tell them when it was time to meet, make all of their decisions for them, etc. then there was nothing there. Of course I could have sent someone out to meet with them, but what would happen if I couldn't? Then some denominational preacher could come along, especially if he had something to give them temporarily, and lead them away into some man-made church. So having experienced this sort of thing again and again, I finally concluded that this just wasn't the way to handle the village situation.

In my estimation, we would be wise to work in the larger cities among the better educated type people and those with leadership ability. Then with the passing of time, proper teaching, and converting as many as possible, we should train the local people to take the gospel to their own people. The missionary can just do so much anyway and then it is up to the local people to take it from there. By handling it in this manner many problems would also be eliminated. It would do away with the foreigner's role and that of giving false hopes and leaving behind hired preachers, and would tend to build a more solid work. This would be slower to begin with, but would in the end accomplish so much more. As of now, quicker results are gotten, but much of it will eventually be lost.

Those who enter the mission field should make a real study of this problem and deal prayerfully and cautiously with it. This is bigger than one man, or what is being done in one country, in that the future of the cause of Christ is involved here. Unless some mistakes are corrected there can be little hope for much being accomplished in the near future. The gospel should be preached to the village people, and must be, but only when the people can be taught properly, truly converted, and then have the opportunity to be faithful to the Lord.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the village people of the world and their present condition.
2. Why do preachers of the gospel often go to them instead of going to the educated people of the city ?
3. What happens often times after they are baptized ?

4. Explain what it takes to convert most people.
5. Define Communalism.
6. What connection does communalism have with mass conversion ?
7. How do the village people often look on a white man ?
8. Why are they often willing to submit to baptism ?
9. Are they able to direct their own work ?
10. How does the missionary often solve the problem ?
11. Can village preachers be trusted ?
12. Do the local people respect them ?
13. What do brethren in the States think of all of this ?
14. Discuss what often times happens to village work.
15. Give a solution to this problem.

DISCUSSION

1. Do you have any idea at all what village people are like in Asia, Africa, etc ?
2. Can you imagine what communalism is like and the effect that it can have upon village people ?
3. Have you any idea of the influence that a white man may have on a group of colored people ? (Those of you who have gone to college can recall what an impact the foreign students had on the local students).
4. Would it be possible for you to picture the poverty of these people and the extremes they would go to better their situation ?
5. With your knowledge of the necessity of leadership here at home, can you imagine how difficult it

would be in such places, to find capable responsible leaders?

6. How could untaught, untried babes in Christ be hired to lead a similar group of people and anything worthwhile come out of it ?
7. What would you think would be the most desirable solution to this problem ?
8. Since you may not be familiar with these situations then all you can go by is what you are told. You are therefore encouraged to investigate these matters and see for yourself. As you do so, use a little common sense.

LESSON EIGHT

PAYING PREACHERS

The Bible certainly teaches that it is proper and right to support those who preach the gospel of Christ. In sending the seventy out, the Lord instructed them as to what to do on enterning a house. He said, "and in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give : for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house." (Luke 10 : 7). After Paul had presented numerous examples to show how that those who labour are to be rewarded accordingly, then he concluded by saying, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Corinthians 9 : 14). So the basic question of supporting preachers does not enter the picture just here. However, the question does arise as to which preachers should be supported.

Even in the States not all preachers are supported by the church. Those who teach error cannot he backed financially or otherwise. Sometimes a congregation is unable to pay its preacher for various reasons and therefore he must earn his living otherwise. This means that there are limitations imposed on this kind of thing either because of necessity or for different purposes.

Surely there are many things to be considered when we begin to think about sending the gospel to other parts of the world and how far we should go in supporting such a noble effort. There is no doubt whatsoever about supporting those who go, for Jesus commanded that they should go. (Mark 16 : 15, 16). Then Paul asked, "... and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent ? ... " (Romans 10 : 14, 15). This means then that the church should send him, and therefore support him. But it involves something else to expect the church in America to support all of those in another country who desire to preach. It is not that it would basically be unscriptural, but would it be wise ? Would it be in the best interst of the work ? Would it not be better to build the local work up to the point where the church there can support its own preachers ?

So many of our missionaries have gone into different countries and placed scores of local members of the church on the payroll. Often times these men represent those who have just come out of denominationalism, have little Bible knowledge, and end up in doing more damage than good. Then why are they hired ? There are several reasons that are put forth to justify this. The missionary finds himself all alone, desperately in need of help, but no one responds to his call. He feels that he has no other alternative but to turn to the local members, although they are still young in the faith, untrained, and untried. You would actually have to experience a similar situation to really be able to appreciate this kind of predicament.

In spite of the great needs, the many opportunities to do good, there are numerous reasons why it is unwise to to begin placing the local people on the payroll. Let us consider some of them :

1. Missionaries are sent to different countries to preach the gospel and to plant the cause of Christ, but not to supply all of the financial support for all of the local needs. We read of the Apostle Paul going into many different areas of Asia and Europe but we have no record of where he ever gave one man financial support. He was not sent out to hire preachers, build meeting houses, etc., but to preach the gospel. Furthermore, he did not always have sufficient support to take care of

his own needs, and therefore was not in position to offer others any support.

2. To begin to hire local people to preach the gospel only leads to that of attracting the wrong kind of people. In the end about all you have is a group of hirelings. They will supposedly work for the Lord as long as the support is forthcoming, but what will happen when the pay checks cease ? The hirelings, and most of them are just that, will go elsewhere to find similar jobs with some other religious group. I know, for I have seen it happen more than once. Others can tell you the same.

3. It is not possible to hire men to preach the gospel when they have just come out of denominationalism and expect them to preach the truth. I have known of numerous cases where men were barely taught the gospel, were baptized, and no sooner had they come out of the water than they were being sent forth with support to preach the gospel. I have known of brethren who were begging the church to help support those who had just left denominationalism. Pleas were made for these men on the basis they should not be penalized for leaving error to accept the truth, and since they had been preaching for different denominations, then the church should pick up their support to make it possible for them to preach God's word. But it is not difficult for a man to leave one church to become a member of another when it amounts to no more than changing jobs. All such preachers, in most every case, are nothing more than hirelings. But whether hireling or not, without proper teaching and training, such men cannot be expected to go forth to preach the truth. Rather, they will end up preaching and teaching what they know and that is denominational error. There are places in the world today where the

Lord's people are supporting men to preach error and to build sectarian churches. When you know the facts, this is the only conclusion that you can come to unless you are purposely deceiving yourself and those with whom you are dealing. It may make a good story on the surface, but in the end there will be nothing left. It is so sad that a lot of our work consists of this type of thing.

4. Hiring local preachers destroys the initiative of the local members. They will sit back and allow the missionary to tell them what to do and not to do, for after all he is responsible for all of the financial support for the work. Then why should the congregation feel any responsibility in giving since all of their needs are already cared for? People are human enough in any part of the world to let the other fellow support them if he will do it. It is the same in church work as in anything else.

Why is it that we hardly have a self-supporting church anywhere in the world outside of the United States? Is it not because we have offered to take care of the financial side of the work, and therefore have ended up in having to continue to support all of the work that we are doing year after year? In my personal judgment, if we ever really establish self-supporting works throughout the world then we are going to have to place more and more responsibility on the people with whom we are working. I don't believe that the church in America can support all of the preachers in the world, and I don't believe that it would be wise if we could do so.

Not only have we made a sad mistake in going in and hiring a lot of preachers, but we have made even a greater mistake in encouraging congregations in America to directly support them. How can a congregation in America intelligently support and direct a man that they have never seen in a foreign field ? In most cases they don't know the difference in economies of the two countries, they offer too much support, which ends up in doing more harm than good for the cause of Christ there. Then they often end up in being used, granting various requests, sending additional funds, etc., that often ends up in the preacher's pocket. I know of no way for this kind of things to be done so that it can end in success.

It is so sad that so many missionaries and congregations are determined to continue with these practices. They often resent any advice or suggestions on these things. They feel that they know what they want to do and that they are going to do it regardless. Such is foolish reasoning, especially when it has been tried again and again only to end in failure.

All of this is to say that a great deal of wisdom and caution should be used in the mission field. While preachers should not be hired and supported on a wholesale basis, this is not to say that no local people can be used. For example, secretarial help may be needed in some cases. There also may be a need for hiring a translator, or to take on someone to help with the Bible Correspondence Work, etc. Even this should be avoided if possible. The less you become involved financially with the local people then the better off the missionary will be.

In the end, the main goal is to preach the gospel among the local people and to establish a strong work. This can be done, provided the individual or individuals directing it have patience to lay a good foundation and then to build upon it accordingly.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the Bible teach about supporting preachers ?
2. Are all preachers to be supported ?
3. Should missionaries be supported ?

4. Is it wise for the church here in the States to support a lot of foreign preachers ?
5. What have so many of our missionaries done in foreign lands ?
6. Discuss the kind of preachers that they have hired in so many instances.
7. Why have they done this ?
8. For what reason have preachers been sent to other parts of the world ?
9. Have they been sent to supply all of the local financial needs ?
10. What kind of people are attracted when the preacher begins to hire local men ?
11. Who is a hireling ?
12. Can one be counted on to preach the truth when he has just come out of denominationalism but he has not had any additional teaching and training ?
13. What does the hiring of preachers do for the local members ?
14. Why do we not have more self-supporting congregations outside the States ?
15. How are we ever going to be able to establish self-supporting works ?
16. Is it in the best interest of world evangelism for congregations in the States to directly support local men in the field ?
17. List some of the problems that come out of this kind of arrangement.
18. Why do missionaries and congregations continue to engage in this kind of thing ?
19. Does this mean that it is never in order to hire any local help ? Explain.
20. What is the main goal of the church ?

DISCUSSION

1. Would it be wise here in the States to go out and convert fifteen or twenty young men and then immediately hire them to go out to preach the gospel? If not, then how could it possibly be the wise thing to do in a foreign country? Discuss.
2. What do you feel we are going to have to do to begin to have more self-supporting congregations?
3. Why no brethern at home get involved in supporting local preachers in other countries ? Is this wise ? Discuss.
4. Are most members of the church aware of the difference in economies between the States and poorer countries ? Are they aware of the situations and conditions in those countries ? Do they realize that they may be doing more harm than good when they pour their money into such places ?

LESSON NINE

EDUCATING PREACHERS

One of our greatest problems in a foreign field is that of educating our young preachers. Naturally, since we are educated, and recognize the need for training, then we would like for our young men to have similar teaching and training. But what should we do ? Should we send them back to the States, direct them to a school in a neighboring country, or to try to help them locally ?

1. Sending Someone to the States.

In the past many of our missionaries have simingly had one thing in mind and that has been to convert someone and get him on the way to the States as soon as possible to attend a Christian College. This may have carried some prestige with it since a man could always say that he had one or more in the States to obtain a Christian education. Again, knowing of all of the good such an education did for them, then they may feel that if they can just get these people to a Christian College in America then they will come out strong, dedicated, and capable workers for the Lord.

2. The Sad Results.

The sad thing about sending foreign members of the church to the States for their education is that almost one hundred per cent of them are lost to the cause of Christ in the end. Most of them go from a lower economy country to America where the economy is so much higher, and thereafter getting adjusted to it, find that they cannot return home. Therefore, the majority of them never return, and in most cases, after getting their education at the expense of the church, end up in accepting some secular job in the States, and even this would be unforgiveable provided they remained faithful to the Lord, but usually they forsake the church too. That means then that some of the better members of the church in different foreign countries are sent away only to be lost, not to mention the money, time, etc., that has been invested.

3. The Few who return.

But what about the few who do return home ? How do they turn out ? They often create many problems too. Now that they have been educated in America, have adjusted to a different way of life, then they not only feel that they should be supported by the church, but demand that they be given much more than what the local people normally receive. In other words, they have to be returned as a missionary. With such an education, and the travelling that went with it, the salary that they have, and so on, then they may feel important and superior to the local people. Besides the jealousy and envy it creates, there may also be reasentment on the part of the local people. But there is no end to this. Others may approach the missionary about the possibility of going to America to receive their education. If this procedure continues, then it will have a tendancy of drawing young people in particular who supposedly are coming because of their interest in religion but who in reality are merely trying to work themselves into a position so they can go to the U.S.A. to study. If they are turned away then they resent this and remind the missionary again and again of the one (or more) that he did send. As you can see, the problems are endless.

4. Why do Brethren Continue to Send Men to the States ?

With all of these problems arising out of this kind of thing, then you can't help but wonder why brethren will continue to send foreigners to the States for their education. I think that most of those who have had some experience in this have learned their lesson by now, and would be opposed to it as much as anyone. Usually the ones who are guilty of it are those who have just gone to the field to begin their work and often they are the kind that must find out for themselves. Although there have been many warnings sent out on this, a lot of brethren don't seen to be able to learn from others, and the mistakes they have made, but trot right along in the steps of those before them and make the same mistakes. This is very sad.

Then another problem we are faced with is the fact that so many of our Christian Colleges offer scholarships to foreign students. You would also think that by now, and with all of the negative experiences that they have had in dealing with them, that they would have ceased practicing this kind of thing a long time ago, but not so. Evidently it carries a certain amount of prestige for the college to say that it has so many foreign students from so many foreign countries around the world. But to do so is not in the best interest of foreign mission work.

Another problem arises out of the fact that American Christians sometimes visit foreign fields on their vacation or through business and they have a habit of getting some young man or woman off to the side to tell them that if they want to go to the States for further study that there will be funds available to help them with this. These Americans think they are doing these young people, and the work, a great favor. They do not realize the damage they are doing.

5. What about Schools in the General Area ?

In order to get away from this, some colleges and schools have been established in Asia, and other places in the world, to provide local teaching and training for those who want it. However, I have observed that many of the same problems are created when these young people have to leave their country to go to another even if it is a neighboring country. Therefore it is my conclusion that as missionaries we are to preach and teach God's word to the local people and limit it to that. In other words, it is not our job to go into a country and begin to ship people out. If we engage in this kind of thing we are defeating our purpose for being there.

6. The Only Solution.

But the question once more arises as to the teaching and training of the local people, especially the young men who want to prepare themselves to preach the gospel. In my estimation they should look to their own local schools and colleges for their secular education. Then for their religious education, they will have to study on their own and look to the local missionary for additional teaching and training. Then if there are two or more missionaries present perhaps a Bible School can be set up to offer special courses of training. In time a Christian College might even be established, but this can not be expected overnight. Now those who are sincere and dedicated to the Lord will take advantage of the local opportunities they have and will be thankful to have them. There is always a way for those who are determind. But for those who are not interested in this type of procedure then it is evident that they are not interested in Christian education but they are interested in using the church to further their own cause.

When we look back on the early church in America we find that it grew because there were people in it who were dedicated to the Lord and who were determined to serve God and to preach the gospel to others. These men were not sent to Europe for a Christian education. Neither were thes supported by congregations in England or elsewhere. The church was also in the process of being restored there and it was small in number. But again, brethren kept studying, preaching, and working with the result that the church grew and grew. In time schools were established to teach and train those who wanted to preach. As a result of all of this then we see the church as it exists in America today. But this took time. And it is going to take time in the different countries around the world for the gospel to be preached, for the church to be established and to grow to the point where it can have its own teaching and training programe. But it is something that must be done locally. To try to take shortcuts, as we have suggested, will only end up in slowing up this procedure instead of speading it up. We need to learn from past experiences and have wisdom enough to try to do better.

QUESTIONS

1. State one of our greatest problems in a foreign field.
2. What should we do with our young people and their education ?
3. Explain what a lot of our missionaries have done in the past.
4. How do most of these cases turn out ?
5. Why is it not possible to send young people to the States to obtain a Christian education ?
6. What is the story on the few who do return ?
7. Mention some of thc problems that they create.
8. Why do brethren continue to send men to the States ?
9. Discuss the reasons why Christian Colleges continue to offer scholarships to foreign Christians.
10. Tell what happens occasionally when American Christians visit the church in foreign fields.
11. Would it be advisable to send the local Christians to schools in neighboring countries ?
12. Give the only possible solution available.
13. What did the early church in America do about the problem of educating her young people ?

DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever been associated with any foreign Christians here in the States ?
2. What was your impression of them ?
3. Do you know of any (even one) who ever returned to there home land to work for the Lord ?
4. What is your reaction to all of this ? How do most members of the church feel about bringing foreign Christians to America for their education ?
5. Can it be a wise practice when the majority have been lost to the church ? Discuss.

LESSON TEN

BUILDING MEETING HOUSES

During the first century the church met in homes. (Romans 16 : 5 ; 1 Corinthians 16 : 19). There is no mention of meeting houses in the New Testament, although this does not mean that there is no place for them. The sad part though is the fact that so much emphasis has been put on them that this within itself has become a problem. This has led to a boom in the building of meeting houses, the luxuries that go along with them, etc. Then worlds of people have become so accustomed to such facilities that they would find themselves helpless without them.

1. Denominations Led the Way.

This problem has been transferred from the States to foreign mission fields. Inasmuch as the denominations have led the way, then they have proceeded to build similar meeting houses to those that they have been accustommed to at home. In turn, this has created within the local people the feeling of necessity for such meeting houses. Missionaries of the Lord's church have not helped the situation much for they have followed the general pattern.

2. American Missionaries Follow the Trend.

One of the first things that our missionaries often think of when they go into a foreign country is that of a place to meet for worship. While they may resort to a rented hall or even that of meeting in a home to begin with, you can be sure that in most cases that even during this time they are already thinking about that of buying property and constructing a building on it for the future use of the church. This can become a big operation with many problems.

3. The Work is Measured by a Meeting House.

For some reason both the missionary and the church in the States measure the work in the country under consideration on the basis of whether it has been successfull in building a meeting house or not. It doesn't seem to matter much as to whether the gospel is being preached, the people are obeying the Lord, and a lot of other things, but if the missionary has been able to buy property and to construct a meeting house then his work there is labeled a success.

There are many things to be taken into consideration when you begin to think about a building in the mission field. In the first place, is it needed ? Who is going to pay for it ? What kind of building should be constructed ? Who will control it ? Will it be an asset or a liability ?

4. Problems in Trying to Build.

Naturally if the missionary goes into a foreign country to begin the work of the Lord, and he sets out almost immediately to find property and to enter into a building program, then it means that the church in America will have to foot the bill from beginning to end. If the missionary does not already have the funds available for such a project, and he probably doesn't, then he will have a frustrating experience of trying to raise the necessary funds through the mail. This will take most of his time for months, even if he is successful. However, he may not be successful. If not, this can add to the problems and frustrations, especially if he has already committed himself to a piece of property or to the indebetness of a building program. This may force him to have to borrow some money for the present and to even return to the

States to raise what is needed. By the time all of this is done, then most of his time may have been used up, and all he has to show for is a building. Then unless he returns, or has someone to come as his replacement, then what will happen to the building ?

5. Problems in Holding on to It.

Often times much a building does not suit the local needs. It may be too large, too luxurious, or in the wrong location. But there it is, good or bad, and now it is imperiative that the work be continued if for no other reason than to protect the investment that the church has put into it. Then holding on to that property may be a real struggle. A lot depends on the country, its rules and regulations on church property, foreigners owning property, and so on. Even then, those rules and regulations can change over night. Then there is always the danger of the place falling into the hands of a local member who will then treat it as his own private place. Or there may be a party in the area who figures that he can come in with a false deed, or in some other way scare the foreigner off, and take it over for himself. I know of a situation right now where the church owns some property and for the last several months some of the local people have been trying to take it away from the missionary, and now that they have given up, he has been forced into a court battle with the city inasmuch as it is claimed that part of the property had been sold to the Planning Commission for further development. But the church in the States seems more concerned about the property, and what is going to happen to it, than with the local congregation. Recently they asked that a member of the church who was passing through to look into the matter, but nothing was said about checking on the welfare of the church itself.

6. What Do the Local People Think of It ?

Besides taking a good chance on losing all of the money, time, and effort put into such a program, then how do the local people look on such a project ? Having not had any responsibility in putting the meeting house up, then the members feel no responsibility in keeping it up. Furthermore, they think of it as belonging to the foreigner and therefore it is up to him as to what happens to it.

7. How Can We Help the Local Work ?

If we really want to help the local people of a country, then we should forget about buying property, building meeting houses, etc., and concentrate on preaching and teaching God's word, converting souls, and planting the cause of Christ so that it will live on in the years to come. But what about a place to meet ? We can begin by renting a place, having the church to meet in our home, or better still, as soon as possible, begin to have the church to meet in the home of one of the local members. The more responsibility we can give the local people then so much the better for the work.

8. Let the Local Church Take the Lead.

As the church grows in numbers, and in spirituality, if the members are interested in having its own place of worship, then encourage them to take the lead in locating such a place and constructing their own building. Until they get to the point where they want one, and are willing to invest in it, then they don't need such a place. But when they put forth the necessary effort, and are willing to personally invest in it, then they are headed in the right direction. They will know the best place to locate it, and they will have a better idea as to the type of place they need, and will act accordingly. It may not be exactly a copy of some of the meeting houses in the States, and it may be small, but that is all right. At least it will be theirs and the church can grow by using it.

How we need to learn that we can just do so much for people, but that they have to do a lot of things for themselves. Our responsibility is that of taking the gospel to them, and then it is their responsibility to take it from there. The less we do, and the more they do, then the better things are going to be. We must realize to that buildings are nice to have, but not a necessity in a lot of places in the world. America may have certain needs, but other countries may have different needs according to their economy, etc.

QUESTIONS

1. Where did the church meet in the first century ?
2. Do the scriptures speak of any specific meeting houses as we know them today ?
3. Is there anything wrong in having meeting houses ?
4. What is the big problem that we are confronted with in relation to buildings ?
5. State the problem that the denominations have transferred to the mission fields around the world.
6. Have our missionaries followed this general pattern ?
7. Why is the Lord's work so often measured by a meeting house ?
8. List some things that should be taken into consideration when brethern think about building a meeting house in the mission field.
9. Who almost invariably ends up in having to foot the bill ?
10. What else is involved in a building program ?
11. Discuss some of the problems that may result from that of having a building.
12. How do the local people usually feel about such a building ?
13. In what way best can we help the local people ?
14. Where can the church meet if it does not have its own building ?

15. Will the local people ever get to the point where they will build on their own ? If not, do they really need a building ?
16. What is our main responsibility in a foreign land ?
17. Are buildings a necessity to the Lord's work ?
18. What must be considered in each individual country ?

DISCUSSION

1. How much emphasis do you feel should be placed on buildings at home and abroad ?
2. Have not most congregations gone to the extreme in their building programs here at home ?
3. Do you feel that the church here at home should be responsible for building meeting houses around the world ?
4. How do you think our money can be best spent in the Lord's cause ?

LESSON ELEVEN

BENEVOLENCE

America is one of the richest countries in the world. This makes many things possible that couldn't be done otherwise. It also gives birth to many problems. For instance, most foreigners have the idea that since you are from the States that you have plenty of money and that their every little need can be cared for.

1. The Beggar Problem.

In many of the Asian countries in particular there are hundreds of beggars. They are on the streets, in the market places, and they make their rounds in the residential areas. It becomes a question then as to who should be helped, and how much they should be given. However, if you helped everyone then you would soon be broke yourself. Of course this usually is a personal matter and each one has to make his own decision.

The church is also drawn into the picture. Since so many of the people are poor and feel that the church can help them, they come with their many requests. Often times they come supposedly interested in becoming a Christian. Then once they have been baptized then they begin to ask for help. It may be for some food. They may want clothes. They may ask for help in getting a job. Then there is the education of their children to think about or medical supplies. There is also the possibility of a loan which will never be paid back. In other words, they have chosen to use religion to obtain material help.

2. Educating the People.

Because of this development then it is necessary to make it plain before each baptism that just because one is becoming a Christian that doesn't mean that he should expect the church to take care of their every little material need. Once this is made clear, if you are approached later on for assistance, then you can refer back to what was said prior to the baptism. However, it should also be pointed out that the church is interested in an individual's physical welfare, but that two things must be taken into consideration. First, is the individual deserving of help? Second, even if he is deserving of help, then the question has to do with whether or not the church is financially able to help. If it has no funds then it cannot help even if it wants to. Right here, one can get in a lesson on the importance of each member giving to the church as he has prospered so that the church can help those who are deserving of help.

The impression should not be left by any means that the church is carrying on a give-away program. For sure, if there is a disaster or emergency in the city or area then the church should help freely as it is able. But if no such emergency exists then each individual that is requesting help should be considered on the basis of what the Bible teaches on the matter.

3. Give-Away Programs.

Some religious groups are guilty of passing our clothing, food, etc., freely to those who will come and get it. You can imagine how this kind of thing could be abused. In the first place, many people receive things that are not in need of help. Some even take what they receive and sell it and go back for more. Then such practices draw masses of people into such churches. Also, some congreations of the Lord's church gets involved in this kind of operation, but it will not accomplish any worthwhile results. Those won through material help will remain only as long as they continue to receive such assistance. Once it ends then they are off to receive similiar help from some other source.

4. What the New Testament Teaches.

The New Testament lays down certain principles when it comes to that helping others. For example, Paul wrote : "Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents : for that is good and acceptable to God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Let not a widow be taken into the number under three score years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works ; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the affilicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry : Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house ; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I wlll therefore that the younger women marry, bear chlldren, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan. If any man or women that believeth have widows, let them, and let not the church be charged ; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." (1 Timothy 5:3-16).

From the foregoing then we would conclude that not all are to helped even in the church just because they are members. This would include one and all.

A. They are to work if they can find work and are able to do so.

B. If they are out of work, if they have children, or relatives that can help, then they should look to them rather than to burden the church with the responsibility of caring for their needs.

C. It is only after they are unable to work, and have no one that will help them, that they should turn to the church for the help they need.

D. Even then the church cannot help them if it does not have the funds to do so regardless of how great the need and how deserving the individuals may be.

If the people are properly taught on these things, and then help is given according to the principles laid down in God's word, then it will do a lot of good. It will not only help members of the church but will strengthen their faith. It will impress the non-member and lead to the saving of souls. On the other hand, if help is given unwisely then it will only end in doing harm to the work inasmuch as it will be misunderstood, absused, and questioned.

5. Our Mission.

We as the Lord's people need to realize that Jesus has asked us to take the gospel to all of the world. This then is our mission. Our emphasis therefore must always be upon the spiritual side of things. We cannot afford to get off balance and leave the impression that all we are interested in is the physical and material things of this world. Even in helping people with the physical and material things of life, we should not let them conclude that is our only goal, but rather that we are interested in their spiritual welfare more than anything else. (Matthew 16:26).

Again, let us put forth an effort to put the responsibility of preaching the gospel and helping the needy on the local church as soon as possible. They can do all of this much better anyway, and with fewer problems.

QUESTIONS

1. What do most foreigners think of Americans ?
2. Who is a beggar ? Are there any such people today ?
3. Should beggars be helped ?
4. Why do so many poor people approach the church ?
5. What must be made plain before each baptism ?
6. Who is to be helped ?
7. Should the impression be left that the church is carrying on a give-away program ?
8. How do some religious groups deal with benevolence ?
9. Can one be expected to remain very long if he has been won through material help only ?
10. Give Paul's instruction on helping people ?
11. Are all deserving of help ?
12. Can the church help when it has no funds ?
13. What is our mission to the rest of the world ?
14. On what should our emphasis be placed ?
15. Where should we place the responsibility of preaching the gospel and helping the poor?

DISCUSSION

1. Are people easily helped ? Who should be helped in your estimation ? To what extent ?
2. How can people be helped so that it will do the most good ?

3. You have heard it said, "People cannot be taught the gospel on empty stomachs." Is this true? Can they be taught the gospel on full stomachs? Must we fill all such people before we preach to them? Can we? Is this what the Lord commanded?

4. Do you feel that we are accomplishing as much as we should through our benevolence program? Are we doing too much? Not enough? What should we do?

LESSON TWELVE

THE MISSIONARY

The missionary and his family have many things to think about and to do during the time they are in the field. There are many opportunities to do good, many rewarding experiences, and blessings beyond compare. But it is not all a bed of roses by any means. Besides all of the things that we have already discussed in previous lessons, we will consider some other things here that often times turn into real problems within themselves.

1. Communication.

One of the big problems in mission work is that of communication—the lack of it. Sometimes it is a one-sided thing, but it can be a two way street. Most sponsoring congregations are very poor to communicate with their missionary unless they have some special directions to give or some criticism to make. While they may be written again and again, they often remain silent. This doesn't help matters at all. A missionary likes to feel that someone back home is interested and concerned about what he is doing. He therefore could use some letters, encouraging ones. Just a little moral support could mean so much. No doubt the sponsoring congregation is busy, but surely where a number of elders, deacons, and members are involved, someone from that number could write a letter or so every week or two. Surely this would not be asking too much.

All missionaries are not the best in the world to communicate themselves. Some of them are like some of the sponsoring congregations in that they write only when there is trouble or when they need more money. While the missionary may be very busy, he must realize that part of his work involves keeping the brethren back home informed, and therefore it is not expecting too much of him to write a personal letter every week or so.

If both the sponsoring congregation and the missionary can hit the right balance in their communication then this within itself will prove to be a big boost for the work in general. Certainly both should work to this end.

2. Time.

One of the big factors in mission work is that of time. There is so much to do, but there is just so much time to do all that needs to be done. This causes pressure to build up, and often times leads to problems.

Brethren in the States would find it difficult to understand this because here at home then the elders or preacher can always call on various members to help him. He must do the preaching, teaching, writing, visiting and a thousand other things.

It would be wise for the sponsoring congregation to try to understand this and encourage their missionary to take a little time off occassionally to go to a missionary workshop in the area or to visit nearby brethren to get some rest or change of scene. This should also include the family. Great pressures are upon the whole family where they are constantly immersed in the work, with little entertainment, and often with no fellow Americans around to visit. With a little precaution then many critical situations can be avoided.

3. Lack of Support.

Sometimes brethren find themselves in the mission field without adequate support. A lot of Americans are not aware of the fact that most foreign countries are very expensive to live in. There are many expenses there that they did not have to contend with at home. Therefore. their work fund should take care of their rent, school tuition, and similar expenses. Even then, living expenses can grow to enormous proportions. One reason for this is because most foreign people think that all Americans are rich and therefore take advantage of them to make a little extra money. Then for Americans to live anywhere close to the way they did in the States, then it means that they have to pay extra for canned foods, and so on. But be not deceived. I do not know of any missionaries who areliving better in foreign lands then they did back in the States. Most of them are sacrificing considerably in comparison to the way gospel preachers are living at home, not to mention the fact that most of them are receiving less support.

Sponsoring congregations should be very much aware of the needs of their missionary, as well as the needs of the work, and supply the necessary funds. It is to the disgrace of those sponsoring congregations who drift along year after year unconcerned about the needs of their missionary. Some have been known to offer the excuse : "We thought he was receiving sufficient funds, but he should have let us know if he wasn't." But what are brethren going to think if the missionary is constantly reminding the church of his needs ? Why can't the sponsoring church appreciate what the missionary is willing to do and therefore to take the lead in caring for his needs? If it would, then it would make a big difference in his feeling toward them and would be a boost to the work in general.

4. Working with Others.

It can be a wonderful experience to have a fellow gospel preacher or two to work with, but it can also present problems, Most of those who go to the foreign field have strong personalities and therefore they find it very difficult to work together. Personalities clash. There are the pressures of the work and for two or three workers to be thrown constantly together, then envy and jealousy often come out of such associations. Therefore, this can prove disastrous.

While one may be determined not to become entangled in such a clash, he and his family may be so treated by the others that he is forced to respond. I would strongly urge brethren going into a foreign field that they know and understand one another before becoming so involved. They may also take precuautions from the beginning so as to assure themselves that they will not fall into this problem. If there are any questions as to these matters then they should plan to work in separate places. As a matter of fact, it is wise for a lot of brethren to work alone. That does not mean that they are not good men, and wonderful Christians, but their personalities and dispositions may be such that it would be better for them to go it alone than to try to work with fellow missionaries.

5. Length of Stay.

Brethren at home often have the idea that if a man decided to go to the mission field then he should commit himself to this work for the rest of his life. This no doubt turns many away from mission work because not everyone likes to think about going to a foreign country to spend the rest of their life. Rather, the length of stay should be determined by the one who is going. Most of those who do go usually end up in going again and again, but it is their decision. On the other hand, if they were told they had to spend the rest of their lives in a foreign field they probably would have never gone to begin with.

But how long should one stay at a time ? Most missionaries stay between two to five years. It is not good to stay away from home too long even though one plans to continue with his work. To stay away too long then one ends up in being forgotten.

Even if one choses to return again and again, it is not advisable for him to stay too long in one place. While it may have its advantages, it also has its disadvantages. To stay too long will lead to that of weakening the local work. The members will become too depcndent on the missionary. One should labor with the idea of working himself out of a job so that he can move on, and the sooner the better. Even if he is going to stay on within the country, then it would be wise after a time to move to another city.

6. Replacements.

One of the great problems for the missionary, especially if he does not intend to return, since the work still needs help, is to find someone to replace him. The missionary could no doubt do so much more if he wasn't burdened with so many responsibilities, and this is one of them. If he is fortunate then after advertising again and again the need for a replacement, writing dozens and dozens of letters, then he may eventually find someone who is a little interested. It doesn't hurt for him to have a close preacher friend who can be encouraged to come.

Not many conrregations seem to feel that they have any responsibility in locating a replacement. Many of them are only committed to their present missionary and for the time that he will be there. This is a mistake. We need congregations that will commit themselves to world evangelism and it doesn't end after four years of work but it goes on and on.

7. Leaving the Work.

How has the work gone during the past three or four years ? Who will come in to take on the work ? When will he arrive ? What about the meeting place ? Will it be retained ? Will the local members be able to carry on during the intrim ? Will the missionary have to sell his car, furniture, etc., or will they be retained for the next man ? These, and many other things, will have to be taken into consideration. It is not easy to work in a foreign field for any length of time and then to cut lose to return home. Then there are the emotional ties. And all of this takes time. The sponsoring congregation should try to understand this and be as helpful as possible during this period of time to make the transition period as easy as possible.

Besides the trip home, the reports to be made on arrival, then if the missionry is not planning to return, then he has to think about getting settled down somewhere, finding a congregation to work with, etc. Again, the sponsoring congregation should try to be sympathetic during this period of time and be as helpful as possible. Congregations are not Christian where they bring a man home and then coldly cut him off and feel no more responsibility toward him.

There is a right and wrong way of doing everything. Both the missionary and sponsoring congregation should deal with one another in a Christian spirit always. This is the right way and the only way as far as the Lord is concerned.

QUESTIONS

1. State the importance of communication in mission work.
2. Are most congregations good to correspond with their missionaries ?
3. When do they usually write ? Why don't they write more ?
4. Do all missionaries correspond with their sponsoring congregations as they should ?
5. How does time become a problem to the missionary ?
6. What are some of the things that he has to do ?
7. Should the sponsoring congregation ever encourage the missionary to take some time off to attend a missionary workshop, etc. ?

8. Are all missionaries sufficiently supported? If not, why not?
9. Is it cheap to live in a foreign country?
10. List some of the problems that come up in trying to work with others.
11. Why do these problems arise?
12. Would it not be wise for some brethern to work alone?
13. How long should the missionary plan to stay?
14. Should he remain indefinitely in one place? Give the pros and cons of it.
15. State the problem of replacements.
16. Discuss the problems of leaving a work.
17. How should the sponsoring congregation treat their missionary on his return home?

DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever written a missionary?
2. Does your home congregation correspond with any of our missionaries?
3. Does the congregation ever receive letters from any of the missionaries? How are they handled?
4. Do you feel that our missionaries are supported sufficiently? Who should take the lead in seeing that they are?
5. Do you feel that a missionary should go into the mission field for life?
6. How well do our preachers get along at home?
7. Who should be responsible for the replacements?

LESSON THIRTEEN

RESULTS

Jesus commanded that the gospel should be taken into all the world. It is the responsibility of the church to see that this is done. While results may be desirable, the primary emphasis is on the importance of spreading the gospel. But we have placed the emphasis on results. The sponsoring church sends a man to baptize and to establish the church. The missionary has tremendous pressure placed upon him to produce. This encourages many undesirable things. First, sufficient teaching is not always done. Second, a man may not take the time to learn the local language and do other things that would prepare him to do a better work because he is to anxious to send back some encouraging reports. Third, to get more results this leads to hiring local preachers to help. And on and on it goes.

1. Brethren Eat it up.

As the reports are sent into the papers, and directly to the supporters, of all of those who are being baptized, my brethren eat this kind of thing up. They are putting their money into the work to get results and they are getting it.

Brethren love to be deceived. For instance, if they are told that one thousand or ten thousand have been baptized then they automatically conclude that this number has been saved and in their mind they will never think of them in any other way. That means then that as far as they are concerned, that this many people are bound for heaven and nothing can keep them from going there. Their only thought is to encourage and help the missionary to baptize more and more so they can be saved and go to heaven too.

Brethren at home don't conclude that all of those that are baptized locally are going to heaven. They know that with the passing of time that many of them fall by the way side. But because the mission field is so far away it is hard for them to picture the people there becoming unfaithful. While I wouldn't want to dissillusion them, nevertheless, I feel that my brethren at home need to know the facts, and the fact is that where there are so many people being baptized that the majority of them in the end will be lost to the Lord's cause. Why ?

A. Because many of them are village type people and they have not been properly taught.

B. They are really not as interested in spiritual matters as they are in material help.

C. There is no possible way, under the circumstances, to give them sufficient follow-up teaching and guidance to keep them faithful.

Perhaps some of these people may survive but not many can because a proper scriptural base has not been laid so as to make it possible. Nevertheless, brethren here at home eat it up since they don't know the circumstances and the situations involved and in many cases don't want to know. All they are thinking about are the results. And because of the results, when the missionary writes back for more money to do more, to hire more preachers, so that more might be baptized, and more congregations might be established, then the money flows in to him. Then he takes it and generously spreads it around among his workers, and at the same time, he is able to hire more workers. He is a big man since he holds the purse. The local workers must also produce because that is what counts since their salary is at stake. Oh brethren, we need to wake up to what is going on and cut this mockery out and quit exploiting poor ignorant and depressed people.

2. Destroying the work of Another.

If a good job is done in preaching and teaching God's word then there will be results, and good results. Souls will be saved and the church will be established. As time goes by it will grow numerically and spiritually. But what is going to happen to it after the missionary returns home ? Can it survive on its own or will it have to have further help and guidance ? In most cases, a replacement will be needed, but herein is another problem. What will the next missionary do ? Will he continue with the work or destroy it to start all over ?

Believe it or not, but so many missionaries who follow other missionaries seemingly have but one thing in mind and that is to discredit the other man, destroy every trace of his work, so that anything that may be left may be credited to him. I have seen this done more than one time. I have attended missionary workshops and heard my brethren belittle the man that was there prior to their arrival, and the work he did, leaving the impression that the reason that they haven't been able to do much is because they had to spend all of their time straightening up the mess that he left behind However, I have not been impressed by this kind of thing at all, but rather felt that it was but an excuse to destroy one work to build another and to cover up for their own failure to accomplish more

I have often thought of new missionaries (especially when replacing other missionaries) as being like a newly elected Football Coach, Governor, or President. The first thing they do is to come in and discard all of the signs of the previous administration. They fire all of the old aides and assistants and hire new ones. They by-pass former plans, methods, etc., and initiate an entirely new approach. Why? Because they do not want to do anything that would give credit to the efforts of the previous administration. Rather, by scrapping the whole program of the last man, and by beginning all over, then any progress that is made, any accomplishments that are brought about, any results that are forthcoming, will be attributed to them. You know exactly what I mean. And so the new missionary often comes in and he sets out to divorce himself from any and everything that might remind him of the former missionary. Being new, he must prove himself. He has no interest in the members that may already be there. He easily finds faults with them and sooner or later the majority of them may loose interest or quit because of disgust. The last missionary may not have hired any local preachers, but he may begin to do so, or vice versa. Then there may be lost of literature on hand, including Bible Courses, etc,, but he may scrap the whole lot and start all over with the kind of materials that he prefers.

As sickening as this kind of thing may be, what then is going to happen when this man is replaced with the next missionary ? The same procedure may be followed again, and then again and again. Is it any wonder that we are not accomplishing too much in the mission field ? Suppose here in the States that every time a new preacher came in that he scrapped the local congregation and all of its work and started all over. Of course this does not happen, because the local congregation has invited him to accept the work and is responsible for his salary, and so on. But when a missionary goes into a foreign field, then the local church has nothing to do with paying his salary. Furthermore, they have to accept him for better or for worse. Therefore, he can do as he chooses without having to be concerned with the consequences. His salary is still there even if he destroys the local work and no one at home knows the difference. Of course in his mind he is not destroying the work, but just making some needed corrections.

3. The Future Work.

Because of the foregoing then I would not want to follow anyone in the mission field, and I personally prefer that no one follow me. The kind of mission work that the church doing today is not conducive to that of building a permanent self-supporting work. Furthermore, it hurts when you have labored with a group of people for several years and then your replacement comes in and destroys that work and you are no longer even welcome to pass through the city. This kind of thing is happening all the time in different parts of the world.

I believe that as missionaries that we can eliminate this problem if we'll go into a place with the idea that we are going to build a self-supporting work. Surely within three or four years, if we'll use the right approach, then we can have brethren ready that will have the ability to carry on the work after our departure without having to rely on another missionary to come in. Even if further help is needed, then perhaps we can return to finish the job. If we can't return to remain permanently for three or four more years then parhaps we can return occasionally to assist and strengthen the local church some. Even if it dies it would be no worse than having another man to come in and possibly kill it. Then think of all of the money, effort, etc., that goes into this kind of operation, and in the end, nothing to show for it.

This is not always the pattern that is followed, but if you made an investigation of mission work around the would then you might be surprised at what you would find. For instance, how many self supporting congregations can be found throughout the world today ? If you can't find many, if any at all, then what is responsible for it ? Regardless of the progress that has been made, and is being made, why isn't more progress being made ? Surely we can do more than we are doing, and surely we can do a much better job than we are doing at the present. Yes, there is room for a great deal of improvement.

4. What to Do ?

Some would look at our mistakes and failures and would use such as an excuse to quit. But we can't quit. Too much is at stake. We should be big enough to examine our work critically, admit our errors, correct our mistakes, and set out with a determined effort to do a better job. I am sure that if we dwell on our past efforts too long then it can be discouraging. But what about the future, the needs that exist, and opportunities that are before us ? My, as I think about all of the many possibilities that are before the Lord's church then I am greatly encouraged, and I think we are going to do more, and a better job of it, of evangelizing the world in the future. In the other words, I believe that we are going to evangelize the world yet. My God help us to so do.

We have our problems but they are there to solve, to challenge us, and to demand that we do a better job. Furthermore, there will always be problems to deal with, but they can be stepping stones to greater things if we'll work on them, and I am confident that we will.

QUESTIONS

1. What has Jesus commanded ?
2. Whose responsibility is it ?
3. Where should the emphasis be ? On what have we placed the emphasis ?
4. What kind of pressure is placed on the missionary to produce ? What does this encourage ?
5. How do brethren react to all of the baptisms that are reported in the papers, etc ?
6. In what ways are brethren deceived ?
7. Are all those who are baptized in the mission field going to heaven ?
8. Explain why so many of those baptized will eventually be lost to the Lord's cause.
9. Do brethren usually respond to the missionary who asks for more funds to baptize more people ?

10. How does the missionary often use the funds that he receives ?
11. What happens often times when a missionary receives a replacement ?
12. Why do some missionaries engage in that of destroying (in one way or the other) the work of another ?
13. State the results.
14. Does this encourage brethren to look forward to that of being replaced ?
15. Do you suppose this could have anything to do with our failure to accomplish more in the mission field ?
16. How can we build a work that can survive ?
17. What about the future of mission work, its needs, and the opportunities that are before us ?

DISCUSSION

1. What should be our chief aim in doing mission work ?
3. Should a man be supported only because he is able to baptize a lot of people ? Discuss I Corinthians 1:17.
3. What should be the purpose of a replacement ? How can the church guard against their missionary destroying the work of another ?
4. What can we do in the future to assure the church of greater growth in foreign lands ?
5. Should we allow the problems to be found in doing mission work to cause us to become discouraged and therefore to rerult in our giving up ?
6. How do you feel about mission work and the prospects for the future ?
7. What can you do to help further world evangelism ? What can the local congregation do ?